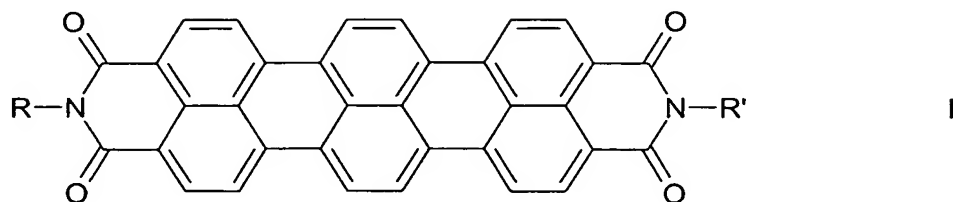


What is claimed is:

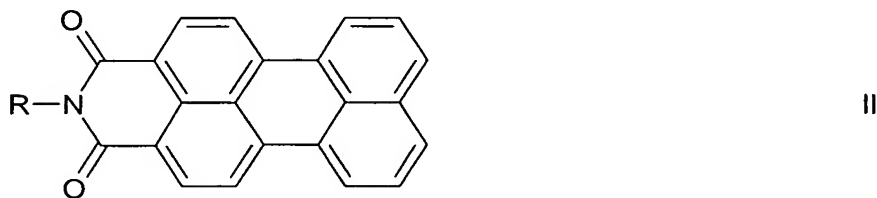
1. A process for preparing terylene-3,4:11,12-tetracarboximides of the general formula I



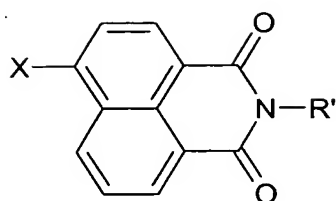
in which the variables are each defined as follows:

- 10 R, R' are each independently hydrogen;
 C₁-C₃₀-alkyl whose carbon chain may be interrupted by one or more -O-,
 -S-, -NR¹-, -CO- and/or -SO₂- moieties and which may be mono- or
 polysubstituted by cyano, C₁-C₆-alkoxy, aryl which may be substituted by
 C₁-C₁₈-alkyl or C₁-C₆-alkoxy, and/or a 5- to 7-membered heterocyclic
 15 radical bonded via a nitrogen atom which may contain further
 heteroatoms and be aromatic;
 C₅-C₈-cycloalkyl whose carbon skeleton may be interrupted by one or
 more -O-, -S- and/or -NR¹- moieties, and/or which may be mono- or
 polysubstituted by C₁-C₆-alkyl;
 20 aryl or hetaryl which may be mono- or polysubstituted by C₁-C₁₈-alkyl,
 C₁-C₆-alkoxy, cyano, halogen, -CONHR² and/or aryl- or hetarylazo, each
 of which may be substituted by C₁-C₁₀-alkyl, C₁-C₆-alkoxy or cyano;
 R¹ is hydrogen or C₁-C₆-alkyl;
 R² is hydrogen, C₁-C₁₈-alkyl; aryl or hetaryl, each of which may be
 25 substituted by C₁-C₆-alkyl, C₁-C₆-alkoxy, halogen, hydroxyl, carboxyl or
 cyano,

which comprises reacting a perylene-3,4-dicarboximide of the general formula II



in the presence of a base-stable, high-boiling organic solvent and of an alkali metal or alkaline earth metal base, with a naphthalene-1,8-dicarboximide of the general formula III



III

in which X is hydrogen, bromine or chlorine.

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2. The process according to claim 1, wherein the organic solvent used is an aprotic organic solvent.
3. The process according to claim 1, wherein the organic solvent used is a polar-
10 aprotic organic solvent.
4. The process according to claim 1, wherein the organic solvent used is a nonpolar-
aprotic organic solvent.
- 15 5. The process according to claim 1, wherein the organic solvent used is a protic organic solvent.
6. The process according to claim 1, wherein the organic solvent used is a solvent containing amino and hydroxyl functions.
- 20 7. The process according to claims 1 to 6, wherein the base used is a strong inorganic or organic alkali metal base.
8. The process according to claims 1 to 7, wherein the base used is an alkali metal
25 alkoxide.
9. The process according to claims 1 to 8, wherein a nitrogen base having lesser nucleophilic action is additionally used as an auxiliary base.
- 30 10. The process according to claims 1 to 9, wherein the reaction is undertaken at from 50 to 210°C.